



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Mountain
Plains
Region

1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204

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Reply to
Attn. of:

SP 94-C-39

Subject:

Policy Reevaluation - Participation in the Special Milk Program of
Split-Session Pre-Kindergarten Programs

To:

STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS
(Special Nutrition Programs)

- Colorado ED, Colorado DH, Iowa, Kansas
Missouri ED, Missouri DH, Montana OPI,
Montana DHES, Nebraska, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming ED

Our National Office has reevaluated program policy to extend the Special Milk Program to children in split-session pre-kindergarten programs who do not have access to the school's federally-assisted meal service program.

As you know, since 1986, schools participating in a federally-assisted meal service program have been allowed to also participate in the Special Milk Program for children in split-session kindergarten programs who do not have access to the school's meal service program. The law which authorized this exception specifically applied this consideration to children in split-session "kindergarten" programs. Our National Office recently reviewed and reevaluated the issue of whether this provision may be extended to other pre-primary children, since they are often in school during the same time periods as the split-session kindergarten programs and also may not have access to a federally-assisted meal program. Upon review of the legislation, it was determined that Congress had not purposefully intended to preclude pre-kindergartners from the same benefits proffered to kindergarten children in similar circumstances under the 1986 amendment. Therefore, the Special Milk Program is applicable also to these younger children participating in split-session pre-kindergarten programs and is effective immediately.

Our National Office emphasizes that this exception applies only to split-session kindergarten and other pre-primary children who do not have access to other meal programs and that, whenever possible, access to program meals should be provided to all children attending participating schools.

Ann C. Hector

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Special Nutrition Programs